

A Short

Bound. 6.

LETTER

To his GRACE the
LORD ARCHBISHOP
OF
CANTERBURY.

BEING

A modest DEFENCE of the Lord
Bishop of BANGOR's Sermon
preach'd before the KING, *March*
31, 1717; especially as it relates
to the Duty of Prayer.

By a Divine of the Church of *England*.

*Charity thinketh no Evil, beareth all Things,
believeth all Things, hopeth all Things,
endureth all Things, 1 Cor. 13. 5, 7.*

LONDON: Printed for J. Roberts in
Warwick-Lane, 1717.

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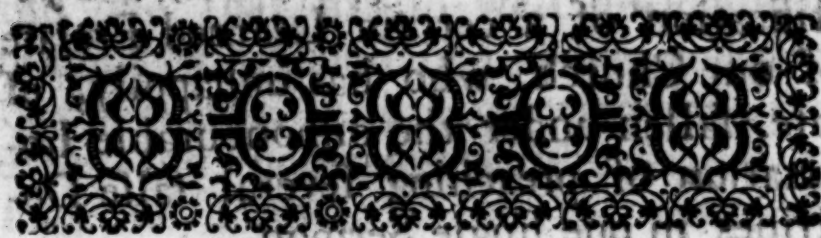
A model of the Lord
Bishop of London's Sermon
preach'd before the KING, March
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By a Divine of the Church of England.

Printed by J. Knapton, at the
Sign of the Sun, in St. Dunstons
Church-yard, 1717.

LONDON: Printed for J. Knapton in
Warwick Lane, 1717.



A LETTER,

&c.

May it please your Grace,



IS not out of any Affectation I have to approach your Eminency by this distant Address, or any other sinister Design or View I have to procure your Favour, and beg your Interest for Preferment, but out of an honest and hearty Zeal for Peace and Truth, and the publick Honour of God and Religion, that I inscribe this Letter to your Grace.

The subject Matter of which, your Lordship will readily perceive, is a short
Essay

Essay towards a modest Defence, and Justification of a certain Learned Prelate of our Church, who has unhappily, of late, fallen under the dishonourable Imputation of preaching several false Doctrines in one single Sermon.

A heavy Charge, if true, 'tis own'd! if not, how unworthy is the Accusation? How unjust is the Impeachment? However great is the *Offence* given to good Men, on one Side or other, *but Woe be to them by whom it comes*, Matt. 18. 7.

A Charge of Rashness, Mistake, or hard Usage on the Accuser's Side, cannot possibly affect the Heart and Vitals of Religion so much, as the Blemish and Reproach of downright false Doctrine does on the other. And therefore, if a Man would engage on either Side, he is at least more readily to be pardon'd, if he attempt what he can to justify the Accus'd, and so to prevent, or alleviate at least, the dangerous Imputation of false Doctrine.

To accuse any private Minister of the Church, with Articles and Positions so destructive of Religion, and the civil Government, and that in solemn Print too, is enough to startle a good Man at any Time.

But

But to accuse a Father of the Church, and one that has so well distinguish'd himself by his constant Labours and publick Writings, with such irregular Principles and notorious Falshoods, as to some they seem to be, and too many are made to believe ; and then farther, to think he should be either so weak, or so daring, as to deliver 'em from the Pulpit, even before his Majesty himself, his Ministers of State, and so many learned Nobles of the Land, is something so shocking and amazing, as may seem to debase the whole Hierarchy at once, and give new Life and Energy to the expiring Lamentation of the Age, *That the Church is in Danger indeed.*

The Reason why I make this particular Application to your Grace, is, your known Moderation and exact Judgment ; both which do justly entitle you to be the proper Arbiter in the Case ; and when to these I subjoin your eminent Station, your great Authority, your paternal Care of the Church, and the Love of your Country, I must beg your Pardon, if I presume to recommend to your Goodness, Wisdom, and Authority, and that with some Earnestness and Emotion of Mind,

Mind, the Peace of the Church, and the Honour of God, which by this unhappy Controversy is so violently disturb'd, and so vilely degraded and eclips'd.

Nay, my Lord, give me Leave in all Duty to remind you too, that it is your very incumbent Duty : The Sanctions and Canons of the Church cry out for Help, and demand it of you, when there is such publick and scandalous Opposition among Preachers, even to the Triumph of the Enemies both of God and the Church, and the Offence of all good Men among us.

As to my Self, I promise my Self all the favourable Allowance which I may in Justice expect ; which at least methinks is this, that I shall not, nay, ought not, to be treated ill, who-e'er I am, because I hope that all Men will in Charity believe I have no ill Design in it.

Now, my Lord, the first engaging Motive with me to lift my Self in this Civil War, was, first, like a good Soldier, to fight for Peace-Sake.

Secondly, To recommend unto the World two very excellent Rules, or Canons of Advice, in order to preserve Church-Communion and mutual Charity, which

which I have lately met with in the first Sermon, in the first Volume of the late incomparable Dr. *Sharpe*, Archbishop of *York*, on these Words: *Let us therefore follow after the Things that make for Peace.* Rom. xiv. 19.

The two Rules which I have particularly abstracted for my own Use at this Time, are these :

First, *Not rashly to charge any Doctrines or Consequences of Opinions upon Men, which they solemnly disown.*

Secondly, *Never to quarrel about Words or Phrases, but as long as other Men mean much what the same that we do, let us be content, tho' they have not the Luck to express themselves so well.*

From the first of these, I would observe to your Lordship, That it does not, I hope, appear that our learned Prelate has at any Time, either in publick Writing, or in private Conference or Conversation, ever maintain'd any such Doctrines as he now stands publickly charg'd with ; and I add, that 'tis now manifest enough, that he publickly renounces and disowns them, and solemnly

ly declares, that he never design'd or projected any such Doctrines or Positions as should either depreciate the Duty of Prayer, or lessen the visible Authority of the Church.

If it be urg'd against all this, that this Attestation of his, is no more but a *protestatio contra factum*, the proper Touch-stone and Criterion in this Case, is, to have Recourse to those Passages in his Sermon preach'd before the King March 31, 1717, which first gave Birth to such monstrous Doctrines as some affirm they are. But when we examine these Passages, let the second Rule be your Guide, and kind Interpreter. *Not to quarrel about Words or Phrases, but as long as he may be suppos'd to mean much what the same as we do, let us be content, tho' at this Time he hath not had the Luck to express himself so well.*

The first Charge against our Prelate, and which I am chiefly concern'd for, is his lame and defective Account or Definition of Prayer, Pag. 7, which he tells us there, is a *calm and undisturb'd Address unto God*. By which Definition some conceive that he denies all *Fervency* and Order of Devotion; and hence 'tis call'd a *depreciating of the Duty of Prayer*. Now, he abhors the Accusation,
and

and protests he had no such Design as to *depreciate a well-order'd and regular Fervency of Prayer.*

The principal Thing in View with him at this Time, no doubt, was, by this Instance, or Notation of Prayer, as well as by others, both before and after, to make good his first Observation, *That Words, through Length of Time, and otherwise, had chang'd their original Meaning.*

So that by this Observation, there must be two Sorts of Prayer. *Prayer* in the original Meaning of the Word, and *Prayer* as it is now conceiv'd of in a new and perverted Sense.

If you ask how this Word *Prayer* has chang'd its first, simple, and natural Meaning, 'tis not by omitting [*Fervency*] of Devotion, but by admitting, in the Room of it, an odd Sort of disturb'd Devotion, instead of a *calm and undisturb'd one*; such a disturb'd Devotion as is manifest in Enthusiastick Ravings and Raptures, in very violent Agitations of the Body, and Perturbations of the Passions.

Now, in Contradistinction to this Sort of *disturb'd* Devotion it is, that he calls Prayer a *calm and undisturb'd Address*

dress to God. 'Tis rather the first, than the last; 'tis *comparatively* and *relatively* so; and therefore if I should call this a *comparative* Definition, rather than a strictly *positive* one, I think I should not much offend against the Rules of Logick. It stands not in the Sermon solitarily alone, as in a System of Divinity, and therefore I hope it may be thought to have a farther Reference to the explanatory Part of this Paragraph about Prayer; which is this: *But now, says he, the same Word, [Prayer] by the Help of Men, and voluminous Rules of Art, is come to signify Heat and Flame, in such a Manner, and in such a Degree, that a Man may be in the best Disposition in the World, [to pray, I suppose] and yet not devout enough to pray, as in the Opinion of some whose Heat in Devotion is too intense, and whose Flame of Devotion soars too high, and spends it self too much, and is in a Manner nothing at last, but Air and Vapour: Nor do I believe that ever there were any voluminous Rules of Art recommended to the World, that tended to destroy proper Fervency of Prayer; and then there is no Need of Complaint, but Fear, that some over-eager Pietists have disturb'd their*

their own Devotion, and of others too, by such rigid Rules, that skrew Mens Devotion up, not to a regular, and well-guided Devotion only, but even to Frenzy and Distraction. And this Rock, I fear, many good and devout Men have dash'd against, and split upon. So that now at last, I hope, our right Reverend Father may be thought so to have explain'd himself, as not to *depreciate the Duty of Prayer*, by omitting *Fervency*, but condemn the dangerous Extreme of it. For tho' *Fervency* is not *mention'd*, yet it may be *suppos'd*, and so not so irreparably excluded as some conceive; I am sure 'tis not formally deny'd.

And there is one Thing which I hope may justify our Pracher, and fully prove that he had no such Design in this Omision of [*Fervency*] as to undervalue the Duty of [*Prayer*,] but only to caution Men against such Rendings and Tearings of both Mind and Body together in Prayer, as at last may destroy the Man, and his Devotion too, rather than improve it, or teach Men to use it in a proper Measure.

And that which I would urge, and desire to be consider'd on this Head, is this, That this deficient Word, [*Fervent*,] Adjunct, or Property, call it what you will,

will, may still be added to our Prelate's Definition, and yet not destroy the *Apolo-*
dosis, the opposite or explanatory Part
 of this Account of Prayer : So that now
 the Definition shall stand thus, *Prayer*
is a calm, fervent, and yet undisturb'd
Address unto God. What hinders, but
 that our Prayers may be fervent, and
 yet *calm and undisturb'd* ? There may
 be Fervency without too intense a Heat,
 and without a Flame too raging. There
 may be a clear and bright Flame, which
 arises from a clean *Pabulum*, or *Focus* ;
 but a crackling Flame, which arises from
 some *heterogeneous* Matter, will disturb
 and obscure the Light. So a River may
 arise to some delightful Height, and flow
 with some regular Violence, and yet not
 overflow its Banks. All Men do not
 pray like Mad-men and Enthusiasts, or
 our *famous Prophets* of late, or use such
 a prodigious Degree of external Devotion
 as some do, and yet I hope may be al-
 low'd to make their Addresses to God
 acceptable, by a calm, *fervent*, and yet
 undisturb'd Devotion.

But I must beg his Lordship's Pardon,
 if I think that Heat and Flame, are here
 not well oppos'd, either without *Fervency*
 being added, or with it. Not without,
 for

for we may pray after a calm and undisturb'd Manner, both with Heat and Flame; and again, not, tho' *Fervency* be added, because Heat and Flame, and *Fervency*, may reasonably seem to mean the same Thing; except he will say, that by this Heat and Flame, he *means* the too intense Degree of both; for then here is Species oppos'd against Species, regular Prayer against irregular, and then the Line of Battle is regularly drawn up on both Sides. This is his *Meaning*, I suppose, and this we are guided to by the subsequent Explanation. But indeed, Heat and Flame are Words too Poetical, too generally and loosely couch'd, to confront of themselves any particular Species of Prayer, whether true or false Prayer, *because* true Prayer may and ought to have Heat and Flame in it; and to be sure such false Prayer as we are treating of, will have too much of it.

But now, that I may not be thought to speak too much without Book, when I say, that this defective Word *Fervent* may now be added to our Author's Definition, without any very great Detriment to his Explanation, I hope I shall be able to justify this Interpretation, and
so

so fairly excuse this Omission of *Fervency* in our Prelate's Definition, even by Authority of holy Scripture. 'Tis said, *James i. 27. That to visit the Fatherless and Widows, in their Affliction, and to keep our selves unspotted from the World, is pure and undefil'd Religion before God and the Father.*

That *Faith* is the proper *Substratum* and Foundation of all our good Works, is a Doctrine I believe none will contest with me, and yet in this Definition, or Account of Religion, here is no Mention made of *Faith*; but yet who does not suppose it? 'Tis the Explanation of the Learned Mr. *Farrington* on this Place.

Sometimes again we are said to be *sav'd or justify'd by Faith*, and sometimes by *Works*, yet none think that *we are sav'd* either by *Faith alone*, exclusive of good *Works*, but by such an operative *Faith* as produceth good Works; nor again, that we are *sav'd by good Works*, except they proceed from *Faith*; and yet, in the Text of Scripture, *Faith* is often mention'd as salutiferous, without good *Works* being mention'd; and so good Works without *Faith*.

So that none can think that this *calm and undisturb'd Address* is exclusive of
Fervency,

Fervency, tho' not mention'd, because, if it were inserted, and supply'd in the Text, or Definition, yet it does not disturb or destroy the Doctrine of the Preacher, especially if we will but follow the *second Rule* of our excellent Archbishop, to be content, tho' he has not had the Luck to express himself so well.

All this relates only to the first Definition, or, if you please, as it stands now compleat; and also to those two opposite Characters of *Heat and Flame*: And yet tho' *Heat and Flame* in general bear no strict *Antithesis*, either to *Calmness and Undisturb'dness*, no, nor to *Fervency* now added, yet this *Heat and Flame* so explain'd as by the following Characters, must be so interpreted, as to signify something that is contrary to a *calm and undisturb'd Address*, nay, contrary to a proper *Fervency* it self; and what is that? A certain Sort of perverted Devotion, that is not *calm*, is more than regularly *fervent*, and so *disturb'd* as to destroy the sweet and serene Harmony of the Soul, and its regular Approaches unto God.

My Lord, I have taken some Pains in this Argument; and to explain the Meaning of this whole Paragraph concerning *Prayer*, because 'tis so essential

a Part of Religion in its proper Use, that where it is lost, or perverted, all must be given up; our *Preaching* becomes *vain*, and our *Faith vain*; or if it be perverted only, Religion is in *Perrils amongst false Brethren*, and in Danger of Defection.

If I have soar'd too high, and attempted what is above my Reach, I hope some will arise, and supply my Deficiency, and never suffer Religion to become the Scoff and Ridicule of the Libertines of the Age, or a Stumbling-Block to be thrown into the direct and peaceable Paths of good Men, through this unhappy Misrepresentation of my Lord of *Bangor*; for so I have the Confidence to call it, not so much from any Thing that I have done, but because I cannot but observe, that the venerable and learned Body of the Convocation have with Honour absolv'd both him and me on this Head, in that they have not thought fit to attack him for any false Doctrine about *Prayer*; he stands not accus'd at their Bar, as if he had any such Design as to *depreciate the Duty of Prayer*. *Fervency* is indeed omitted, but may be suppos'd, or inserted, without any Detriment to his Design;
which

which was not to lessen any *good Property* of *Prayer*, but condemn the *Abuse* of it, and shew how it was become degenerate from its proper Use, and original Meaning.

My Lord,

I find there are two other capital Errors laid to our Prelate's Charge, and they are drawn up by our learned Convocation, one Branch of the visible Authority of Christ's Kingdom or Church in the World; but as he here stands censur'd by Authority, so I shall very little intermeddle in the Case, and wish him and them a happy Reconciliation.

But still, as these Doctrines I find are canvass'd both in the Pulpit, and from the Press, to the daily Prejudice of Religion; and because it may be long before this Strife may be adjusted among them, in the Interim, I beg Leave again to recommend these two excellent Rules of our Archbishop.

Not rashly to charge him with Doctrines which he denies. And secondly, If he has not so happily express'd himself in these Positions neither, as could be wish'd, yet *let us be content.* He is willing and desirous to explain himself

into good Sense, sound and irreprovable Doctrine, by such Expletives as are not only in his Sermon, as now printed, but such as he deliberately affirms were in the original Text of his Sermon before preach'd ; and they are of such Sort, as are allow'd in all Cases of Interpretation, even in all Languages ; and therefore I conceive they ought not to be call'd *Evasions* ; for if they were in the Original, then they have not been put in since, to serve any Turn. Nay, I farther affirm, that tho' they were not in the Original, but inserted since, as his Explanation of himself, yet they ought to be admitted ; for if when they are inserted, they make good Doctrine, and help to clear up what before was obscure, or suspected, then it will be argu'd, that his Doctrine is true, only it wanted such Expletives to solve its Ambiguity.

So that now, if the two controverted Words, *Absolutely* and *Properly*, whether in before or since Preaching will fix, and set his Doctrine right in any fair Construction, *let us be content*, according to our Rule.

Perhaps these two Expletives are not every where repeated, where he repeats the same Doctrine ; yet still, if it, or they,

they, be any where express'd on the same Subject, it is enough ; for else how shall we explain parallel Places of Scripture? By this Way of Interpretation, are not obscure Places establish'd and confirm'd by Places on the same Subject, that are more express? Surely they are. And then, why may not the same Favour and Allowance be made to our Prelate's Sermon and his Explanations?

Expletives are often intirely omitted, and yet are added and admitted too, as good Interpreters ; and they must be allow'd in all Languages. Not to multiply many Instances, accept of two. In the 23d Chap. of 2 Samuel, v. 1, 'tis said, *These be the last Words of David* ; which strictly were not the *last Words of David*, for he spake many Things after, but yet they were his last *prophetical Words*. Consult the learned *Grotius* on this Place. And as for profane Authors, there is a very memorable Passage to this Purpose in *Ulysses's* Speech, mention'd in *Ovid's Met. Lib. 12, v. 225*, where *Agamemnon* being admonish'd in a Dream after nine Years Siege of *Troy*, to return Home into *Greece*, he exhorts his Country-men not to retire, in these Words,

---- *Quid facitis? quæ vos dementia, dixit,
Concitat, o Socii, captam dimittere Trojam?*

when 'twas plain that *Troy* was not yet taken. How then must this *Capta* be reconcil'd to Sense, and the Truth of History? Why, only by such like Expletives as these, and saying, that *Troy* was *penè*, or *quasi capta*, --- in a Manner taken, or ready to be taken.

Words are sometimes strictly, and sometimes loosely taken; and Propositions are sometimes definite, and sometimes indefinite; and we must explain sometimes the loose Words by the strict, and sometimes mollify the strict by the loose; and indefinite Sentences, by those that are more definite and absolute; and expletive Particles must be admitted as there is Occasion; but always with this Rule, *to explain only, and make good the Context*; but *not to patronize any new Sense contrary to the Analogy of the Place*: So that if our Right Reverend Prelate has not well guarded his Words and Sentences; yet, if they can be explain'd into a good Meaning, and sound Doctrine, *let us be content*. And if by such Particles, or any other allow'd Ways of Interpretation, he can be thought to *mean much what the same as we do*, I humbly conceive the publick Opposition he hath met with,

with, ought rather to have been turn'd into fraternal Correetion and Admonition from his Equals, and discuss'd among Friends and Brethren, only in private Letters.

The Profane among the Laity, are apt enough to dispute and cavil with us, and we have Work enough to silence these; but I must own it looks little judicial, to fall out among our selves, and help them with *a Load of Infamy*, which at Leisure they will throw upon us all, without Distinction; and this they daily do. --- *Let then Brotherly Love continue among us, and let us all follow those Things that make for Peace, and those Things wherewith we may edify one another; and then the God of Peace will be with us.*

And yet, when all this is done, as I verily believe, that our Right Reverend Author never writ more loosely or obscurely in all his Life; so 'tis easy to think, that his unguarded Way of Writing at this Time, has brought these Censures upon him; but yet I humbly conceive, that this heavy Charge of false Doctrine, especially concerning Prayer, is more than needs.

To conclude, All that I would willingly be accountable for, from this small Essay, is this; --- First, I do affirm, that
our

our learned Prelate had no Design to *depreciate* the Duty of Prayer, by omitting *Fervency*, but to shew how it was become degenerate from its proper Nature and Meaning, by the Mistake of some, even of very good Men in the World, by using too much of it in a disorderly Manner. 2dly, That those two controverted Expletives, *absolutely* and *properly*, whether in before or since preach'd, ought not to be esteem'd as *Evasions*, but to be admitted as good Interpreters of our Prelate's Sermon, if when they are inserted in suspected Places, they will, in fair Construction, render his Doctrine good and blameless. As to the Doctrine it self, about the Authority of the Church, or the Nature of Christ's Kingdom, I shall not intermeddle in it, but shall still conclude, that whatever secret *Schemes of Reformation* he may seem to countenance and advance by this last Doctrine concerning Christ's *Kingdom*, as some suspect, yet none can ever think, that his Doctrine concerning Prayer, was design'd to favour any such Projection. And then it ought to be struck out of the black List of false Doctrines: And this is all I contend for.

I am your Grace's most obedient Son
in all Canonical Obedience,
Philalethes Philerenes.

F I N I S.

